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ABSTRACT

The Classroom Behavior Task, a ten-minute classroom simulation developed to measure abilities of potential urban teachers, was tested by comparing performance in the Task with on-the-job performance, using the Classroom Behavior Observation Form and a rating scale divided into "strength and sensitivity" components. Subjects of the study were 20 students enrolled in the Urban Teacher Preparation Program at Syracuse University, who were observed during their participation in the Classroom Behavior Task and during the summer, fall and spring semesters of an urban teaching internship. Significant correlations were found between characteristics of strength and sensitivity in the Classroom Behavior Task and summer classroom performance, with sensitivity characteristics having the stronger relationship. Correlations between the Task and fall or spring teaching were not significant. This corresponded with the results of analysis for linear trend. If the subjects in a preparation program continue to develop in the characteristics of the study, then the relationship with the original measurements must decrease. This study is being replicated, and proposals have been submitted for future research in strength and sensitivity. [Not available in hardcopy due to marginal legibility of original document.] (RT)

A Method for the Selection and Diagnosis of Fifth Year Urban Teaching Interns

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Do all preservice teachers require the same types of experience? Most programs of preparation assume that they do as evidenced by standard course requirements and state certification requirements. The practice seems to contradict what is preached in many methods courses--diagnose the learner and then plan his program accordingly. What usually happens is that certain courses are required in Psychology and teaching methods, and the culminating activity in which everything is synthesized is student teaching. An underlying assumption seems to have been made by the designers of the teacher education model that although children have many different learning styles as evidenced by diagnostic procedures taught to student teachers, only the one learning style exists in adults. The implication is that as part of the maturation process somewhere between late adolescence and early adulthood the many learning styles of the youngster converge into the one learning style used by teacher education. The argument that the learning styles A, B, and C, become one in adulthood must not be attributed to teacher education alone because it seems to be the attitude of higher education in general. Diagnosis of the teaching act does not take place until the culminating activity, student teaching. It is a small wonder that

studies such as the one conducted by Charters show that, "forty per cent of those qualified to teach never take public school jobs and of those who do enter the profession, half of them have dropped out after two years of teaching."(1)

The problem suggests that more is needed in the way of assessing a candidate's skills for teaching other than "the completion of prerequisite courses and achievement of a grade-point average of C to C+."(4)

Attempts have been made to determine candidate abilities through the use of pencil and paper questionnaires and personality tests with very little success(2). The problem suggests that perhaps instruments and procedures should be developed for the selection or diagnosis of candidates which is more closely related to the teaching role.

Such an instrument, the Classroom Control Task was developed by Weinstein, Hunt and Joyce(5) to measure the characteristics related to the concepts of Strength and Sensitivity. It was the purpose of this study to determine the degree of relationship between the performance of subjects in an expanded version of the Classroom Control Task, The Classroom Behavior Task and performance in classroom teaching.

The study attempted to answer three questions. First the question of predictive validity, did the behavior exhibited by subjects in the Classroom Behavior Task correlate with the behavior exhibited in actual classroom teaching? Second, the question of whether the behavior of a subject changes in relation to strength and sensitivity as he

proceeds through his program of preparation for urban teaching? Third, the question of reliability, did subjects who had participated in the Classroom Behavior Task and were provided a reference from which to judge performance, change their behavior during a second participation in the Task?

Task Description

The Classroom Behavior Task is a classroom simulation in which a candidate, after fifteen minutes of preparation, meets a sixth grade class for ten minutes. The students are role played by three staff members, who with the aid of two observers, rate the candidate's performance to certain pupil statements and action cues. The candidate's instructions are to "introduce himself, define clearly the limitations of the classroom in terms of behavior and to give an overview of what he hopes to accomplish during the year." The criteria used to determine a candidate's performance is based on Strength and Sensitivity factors.

The Strength factors sought in the Classroom Behavior Task are an ability to 1) initiate structure through the arrangement of elements of subject matter, classroom routines and pupils; 2) to remain consistent in statements and behaviors; 3) to organize ideas in a sequential process; and 4) the ability to maintain self control during tension producing acts or statements.

The Sensitivity factors sought are an ability to 1) seek and utilize pupil feedback; 2) exhibit empathy and commendation as forms of pupil support; 3) use language, which is

neither above nor below the pupil frame of reference; and

4) give an overall attitude impression of warmth.

Rating Scale

The rating scale was divided into Strength and Sensitivity components which can be described as:

Strength Characteristics

1. Control - maintaining classroom leadership.

   Chaos and confusion ⟶ establishment of procedures with agreement of pupils.

2. Consistency - follow through of classroom organizational procedures.

   No follow through ⟶ consistent follow through.

3. Organizing ideas - verbal presentation or direction of a discussion with a theme or direction.

   Unrelated topics ⟶ sequential presentation.

4. Shock - display of flapability to tension producting or unexpected situations.

   Immobility ⟶ non-visible response.

Sensitivity Characteristics

1. Feedback - stimulation of and utilization of pupil comments into the class discussion.

   Does not seek ⟶ seeks and utilizes.

2. Support - verbal and non verbal behaviors used to communicate encouragement, self respect and interest.

   Non recognition ⟶ commendation and empathy

3. Attitude - not a continuum behavior item, but impression descriptions of the candidate's attitude toward children.

Sarcastic ——————→Indifferent——————→Warm

4. Language - the compexity of or level of verbal communication the candidate attempts with the class.

Above or below class level ——————→ Within class frame of reference.

Population

Seventy-nine applicants to the Urban Teacher Preparation Program at Syracuse University[1] participated in the Classroom Behavior Task on several separate weekends in the Spring of 1967. Twenty-four returned to enroll in the Program's Summer Session and became the major subjects for this study. During the end of each observation period, Summer, Fall and Spring, two subjects disenrolled leaving twenty subjects to complete the program and the study. The second group of subjects for the study were fifty-five candidates who participated in the Classroom Behavior Task twice.

Procedures

Subjects were observed in urban classroom teaching experiences during the Summer, Fall and Spring semesters of an urban teaching internship. In each observation phase the subject shared the teaching responsibility with either an experienced teacher or another intern. Observations were conducted when the subject assumed responsibility for the

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[1]The Urban Teacher Preparation Program at Syracuse University, Directed by Ernest J. Milner, places Master of Education interns as half-time teachers in the public schools of Syracuse, New York. Teaching interns obtain a two year intern certificate after the Summer Phase of the program.

class.

Each subject was observed twice each observation phase by two observers trained to use the Classroom Behavior Observation Form. Each observation averaged forty-five minutes or a total of 180 minutes of observation for each subject during each of the three observation phases. The first observation was conducted between the third and sixth weeks of each semester and the second observation was conducted between the seventh and tenth weeks of each semester. The subjects were not aware of when or why they would be observed because visitors were common in the subjects' classrooms. An attempt was made to observe at similar times of the day and similar subject areas.

Fifty-five subjects were given the following information before participating in the Classroom Behavior Task a second time:

1. Personalize: The line of communication for the learning process is the student rather than the subject, use the warmth and tangibility of "you" or "we" rather than "they: or "the".

2. Relevancy: Frequently the pupils' frame of reference is overlooked when a lesson is being taught.

3. Classroom Procedure: Before any information from the child can be utilized, it is generally necessary to clearly define behavioral limitations. A framework for discipline should be established within which the class can operate.

Analysis of Data

The "mean score of observations" was computed for each of the twenty-four subjects during each observation phase. The scores from the first Classroom Behavior Task Performance were

then compared with the mean scores of each observation phase by means of the Spearman Rank Order Correlation to determine predictive validity.

The same data was subjected to trend analysis as outlined by Winer[6] to determine whether the characteristics of Strength and Sensitivity were developmental.

The Total Strength and Total Sensitivity scores of the fifty-five subjects who repeated the Classroom Behavior Task were compared through the Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The subscores were not compared because of a loss of data, but audio tapes were made and they are in the process of being scored again.

Rater reliability was computed according to Guilford[3].

Significant correlations were found between characteristics of Strength and Sensitivity in the Classroom Behavior Task and Summer classroom performance. Correlatinns between the Task and Fall or Spring teaching were not significant.

Only one characteristic, Total Strength was not significant with a rho of (.33). The characteristic of Shock was eliminated due to lack of a sufficient number of observed instances to be statically useful. The characteristic of Control correlated with a rho of (.58)at the (.01) level of significance. Consistency and Organization correlated with rhos of (.41) and (.40) respectively to be significant at the (.05) level.

Total Sensitivity yielded a rho of (.58) significant at the (.01) level. The rest of the Sensitivity characteristics were significant at the (.01) level with rho's of: Feedback(.70),

Support (.66), Language (.68) and Attitude (.75).

In the analysis for linear trend all characteristics with the exception of Control provided an F value which was significant at the (.01) level.

Rater reliability during the Summer phase ranged from (.90) to (.99); Fall from (.45) to (.93) and Spring from (.43) to (.99).

The Pearson Product Moment correlations between Task participation one and two for Strength and Sensitivity were .61 and .71 respectively. Both significant at the .01 level. All levels of significance in this study were determined for one tailed tests.

Discussion of Findings

The Sensitivity characteristics in the Classroom Behavior Task have a stronger relationship with classroom performance than do the Strength characteristics. It is suspected that the statistical relationship determined in this study is greater than the data illustrates. During the Summer phase the population used was enrolled in a program of preparation heavily weighted in role playing, mini courses, video taping and classroom experience to promote the Strength characteristics. The relationship between the Task and classroom were probably stronger in the categories of Feedback, Language and Support because these areas are not emphasized until the last half of the Summer phase and during the Fall phase. The same phenomona may also be the cause for the insignificant relationship of the Total Strength category.

A significant "F" score for linear trend was not produced for the Strength characteristics of Control. In view of results for the other characteristics it is difficult to accept the statistical suggestion that a trend may not exist. An error in rater reliability may have affected the result. One of the two classroom observers in the Summer phase was replaced for the Fall and Spring phases. The reliability for Control between the two Summer raters was (.96), the Fall and Spring coefficients were (.45) and (.43) respectively.

Another factor may have been that the novice teacher builds rapport with the class in the Summer, discovers a successful instruction level on which to communicate with the class and enjoys a certain amount of success. Then when the subject meets his class in the Fall, he unconsciously responds to the class he interacted with in the Summer. This phenomena and the adjustment to a new school may have been responsible for the sharp decline in Control scores in the Fall.

The reductions of relationship between the Classroom Behavior Task and classroom performance throughout the Fall and Spring phases corresponds with the results of analysis for linear trend. If the subjects in a program of preparation continue to develop in the characteristics of the study, then the relationship between the original measurements must decrease.

Ideally because of the median coefficients of validity in the Strength characteristics one should not recommend use of the Classroom Behavior Task without more knowledge about

it gleaned from future investigation. Practically speaking, however, the Sensitivity area has better than chance predictive value as a screening or diagnostic instrument. The limitation of a small N and a population involved in Strength and Sensitivity preparation should also be considered. This study is being replicated and proposals are being submitted for future research in Strength and Sensitivity.

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TABLE I

RANK ORDER CORRELATIONS OF CONTROL TASK WITH
SUMMER CLASSROOM, FALL CLASSROOM AND SPRING CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Characteristic	Con. Task Summer	Con. Task Fall	Con. Task Spring.
Strength total	.33	.02	-.25
Control	*.58	.13	-.36
Consistency	**.41	.21	-.16
Organization	**.40	.07	-.11
Sensitivity total	.60*	.21	.20
Feedback	*.70	.25	-.09
Support	*.66	.23	.39
Language	*.68	.01	.26
Attitude	*.75	.12	.18
	N=24	N=22	N=20

*Significance at .01 level

**Significance at .05 level

One tailed test

TABLE II

F VALUES FOR LINEAR TREND ANALYSIS

Characteristic	$F = \frac{MS\ linear}{MS\ residual}$ F value	Test of Significance for Linear Level of significance at (1.76) df.
Total Strength	23.03	.01
Total Sensitivity	25.19	.01
Control	.51	Not Significant
Consistency	7.06	.01
Organization	102.53	.01
Feedback	35.44	.01
Support	64.38	.01
Language	46.14	.01
Attitude	40.50	.01

TABLE IV

TASK - SUMMER, VARIANCE, STANDARD DEVIATION AND MEAN

		s^2	s	$\bar{x}$
Total Strength rho = .33	Task Summer	9.07 19.50	3.01 4.16	21.49 24.46
Total Sensitivity rho = .60	Task Summer	27.29 47.07	5.22 6.86	29.21 34.92
Control rho = .58	Task Summer	1.90 4.27	1.38 2.07	7.38 7.75
Consistency rho = .41	Task Summer	2.34 4.37	1.53 2.09	7.50 8.33
Organization rho = .40	Task Summer	3.78 1.77	1.94 1.33	6.63 8.33
Feedback rho = .70	Task Summer	3.38 4.06	1.84 2.02	7.50 7.29
Support rho = .66	Task Summer	2.34 5.18	1.53 2.28	6.88 9.63
Language rho = .68	Task Summer	2.90 4.30	1.70 2.07	6.92 9.17
Attitude rho = .75	Task Summer	2.61 5.01	1.62 2.24	7.63 8.88

TABLE V

TASK - FALL, VARIANCE, STANDARD DEVIATION AND MEAN

		s^2	s	$\bar{x}$
Total Strength rho = .02	Task Fall	11.44 22.33	3.88 4.73	21.81 23.90
Total Sensitivity rho = .21	Task Fall	30.63 26.72	5.53 5.17	29.48 36.81
Control rho = .13	Task Fall	1.72 3.67	1.31 1.92	7.52 7.19
Consistency rho = .21	Task Fall	2.72 5.12	1.64 2.26	7.52 7.52
Organization rho = .07	Task Fall	3.15 2.36	1.78 1.54	6.81 9.19
Feedback rho = .25	Task Fall	3.42 7.87	1.85 2.81	7.52 8.38
Support rho = .23	Task Fall	2.76 3.14	1.66 1.77	6.90 9.29
Language rho = .01	Task Fall	2.81 2.56	1.68 1.60	7.05 9.19
Attitude rho = .12	Task Fall	2.88 1.94	1.70 1.39	7.67 9.52

TABLE VI

TASK - SPRING, VARIANCE, STANDARD DEVIATION AND MEAN

		s^2	s	$\bar{x}$
Total Strength rho = -.25	Task Spring	6.56 13.58	2.56 3.69	21.45 27.15
Total Sensitivity rho = .20	Task Spring	23.76 9.61	4.88 3.10	28.85 39.95
Control rho = -.36	Task Spring	1.63 2.10	1.28 1.45	7.45 8.00
Consistency rho = -.16	Task Spring	2.68 3.26	1.64 1.81	7.45 9.00
Organization rho = -.11	Task Spring	2.35 1.50	1.53 1.22	6.60 10.15
Feedback rho = -.09	Task Spring	2.87 2.66	1.69 1.63	7.35 9.85
Support rho = -.39	Task Spring	2.58 .83	1.61 .29	6.80 10.25
Language rho = -.26	Task Spring	2.13 1.16	1.46 1.08	6.85 10.00
Attitude rho = .18	Task Spring	2.47 1.40	1.57 1.18	7.50 9.85

TABLE VII

RATER RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN TWO RATERS FOR ELEVEN SUMMER CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Category	Coefficient
Total Strength	.97
Total Sensitivity	.99
Control	.96
Consistency	.98
Organization	.90
Feedback	.96
Support	.98
Attitude	.98
Language	.96

TABLE VIII

RATER RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN TWO RATERS FOR ELEVEN FALL OBSERVATIONS

Category	Coefficient
Total Strength	.72
Total Sensitivity	.93
Control	.45
Consistency	.69
Organization	.97
Feedback	.90
Support	.66
Attitude	.79
Language	.72

TABLE IX

RATER RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN TWO RATERS FOR ELEVEN SPRING OBSERVATIONS

Category	Coefficient
Total Strength	.89
Total Sensitivity	.91
Control	.43
Consistency	.65
Organization	.99
Feedback	.85
Support	.73
Attitude	.89
Language	.62